

Custodial death in Tamil Nadu

written by iasexam.com | 18/04/2024



Recent News

In Tamil Nadu, the issue of **custodial deaths** has drawn significant attention following a statement from the human rights organisation People's Watch. The forum criticised the state government for four alleged custodial deaths within a span of just 12 days. These incidents have sparked grave concerns about the treatment of individuals in police and judicial custody, prompting urgent calls for action and accountability.

Details on News

- The 4 reported cases People's Watch has uncovered have come about by the persons from different districts of Tamil Nadu which are pointing out the alleged torture and the negligence.

Condemnation and Demands

- People's Watch has no kind words towards the state government officials, and especially, they vehemently condemned their lackadaisical attitude toward the matter with no immediate physical action taken.
- The organisation has asked the government to hand over the probe of all cases to the CB-CID because of the assumption that the organisation qualifies because of its perceived level of professionalism.
- Furthermore, People Watch states that in addition to the suspension of the police and

prison officials involved in these incidents, compensation to the families of the deceased and referrals to [National Human Rights Commission \(NHRC\)](#) is compulsory.

Legal and Social Implications

- The occurrence of custodial deaths has significant legal and social implications. Legally, it challenges the integrity of law enforcement and the justice system, which are supposed to protect the rights and safety of individuals in custody.
- On a social level, impartiality often leads to a loss of public trust in the very institutions that are intended to serve and secure the safety of the community.
- Custodial deaths happen in cycles and, thus, imply the need for a holistic reform of policies and a codification of authorities' responsibilities in a way that ensures that similar incidents will never occur again.

Human Rights Perspective

- The rights of the human kind demand that the takeaways as a result of deaths in custody are a major human rights abuse as they violate the right to life as well as a human being's dignity.
- They are often related to the wider problem of in-custody torture and abuse, which violates the right to freedom from torture ensured by the international human rights law.
- Institutions like the People's Watch have an irresistible role in monitoring and communicating such violations, proposing for their victims and forcing changes to make sure the responsible people are accountable and get justice.

Details about Custodial death

- Custodial death refers to the demise of an individual while in the custody of law enforcement authorities or within a detention facility. It is a matter of serious concern as it often raises questions regarding the circumstances of the death, including the possible abuse of power, neglect, or violation of human rights.
- Custodial deaths occur when individuals under the control of law enforcement agencies, such as the police or prisons, face various challenges, including arrest, interrogation, detention, or while being held as prisoners. These incidents can involve brutality, excessive force, assault, torture, denial of healthcare, or self-harm such as suicide attempts.
- Legal and human rights implications arise as custodial deaths may involve violations of the right to life, freedom from torture, and fair trial principles. Courts often grapple with these complex issues during legal proceedings.
- Investigations into custodial deaths often involve forensic inquiries passed between police stations, sometimes with biased findings. Authorities responsible for the care of individuals in custody can be held accountable for any negligence or failure to ensure basic security and welfare.
- Prevention measures involve enhancing law enforcement abilities, promoting accountability, and ensuring access to medical services for officers. Public awareness, advocacy, and monitoring by human rights organisations are crucial in raising

awareness, holding authorities accountable, and proposing reforms to prevent future deaths in custody.

Conclusion

The condemnation by People's Watch serves as a stark reminder of the critical need for transparency, accountability, and reform in the handling of individuals in custody. It underscores the importance of safeguarding human rights and upholding the rule of law. The Tamil Nadu government's response to these incidents will be closely watched by human rights advocates and the public, as it will set a precedent for how such serious allegations are addressed in the future.

Source: [The Hindu](#)

UPSC Mains Practice Question

Q. Discuss the challenges and implications of custodial deaths in the context of law enforcement agencies in India. Highlight the legal and human rights concerns associated with such incidents. Assess the effectiveness of existing mechanisms for investigation, accountability, and prevention of custodial deaths.